

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: ETRN, US, JA

SUBJECT: SHIPPING: JOURNAL OF COMMERCE ARTICLE OF
JAPANESE DOCK NEGOTIATIONS

REF: TOKYO 4626

1. NY JOURNAL OF COMMERCE OVER LAST SEVERAL DAYS HAS GIVEN
FRONT PAGE COVERAGE TO JAPANESE DOC LABOR CONTRACT
NEGOTIATIONS. ARTICLE IN APRIL 1 EDITION LINKS
NEGOTIATIONS TO RECENT US- JAPANESE SHIPPING TALKS
(APRIL 12-13, TOKYO). FOLLOWING ARE SUMMARY AND EXCERPTS
FOR INFORMATION OF THE EMBASSY.

2. ARTICLE (WITH CULLISON BY- LINE) NOTES FAILURE OF
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PORT AND HARBOR TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION
AND THE JAPAN PORT TERMINAL OPERATORS ASSOCIATION TO REACH
ACCORD AND PREOCCUPATION OF FOREIGN FLAG LINES THAT
AS EARLY AS END OF MARCH AN AGREEMENT WAS REACHED THAT
DOCKERS WOULD NOT BE OBLIGATED TO WORK NIGHTS OR ON
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SUNDAYS. JAPAN FOREIGN STEAMSHIP COMMITTEE REPORTEDLY SENT TWO LETTERS OF PROTEST TO JAPANESE MOT WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN ANSWERED OR ACKNOWLEDGED. ARTICLE CONTINUES THAT MRS. BENTLEY, FMC CHAIRMAN, ASSURED BY GOJ OFFICIALS PROTEST LETTERS RECEIVED AND WOULD BE ANSWERED. ARTICLE SPECULATES REASON FOR FAILURE IN REACHING CONTRACT ACCORD RESULT OF MOT (WHICH HAS TO APPROVE ANY AGREEMENT) PULLBACK ON ALLEGED AGREED- UPON NIGHT AND SUNDAY WORK ARRANGEMENT.

3. SALIENT PARAGRAPHS OF THE ARTICLE FOLLOW VERBATIM.

A) MRS. BENTLEY RETURNED TO WASHINGTON OVER THE WEEKEND WITH THE CLEAR IMPRESSION THAT TRANSPORT MINISTRY OFFICIALS WOULD TAKE THE PROTESTS OF THE FOREIGN LINES IN A SERIOUS VEIN AND THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE TOTALLY ELIMINATED FROM THE NEGOTIATIONS.

B) THERE ALSO WAS THE IMPRESSION THAT MRS. BENTLEY FLEW BACK TO WASHINGTON WITH THE FEELING THAT THE FOREIGN LINES SOMEHOW WOULD BE SAVED FROM ALL THE COSTLY TURN-AROUND TIME INVOLVED IN NO NIGHTWORK.

C) ALTHOUGH, OFFICIALLY, THE TRANSPORT MINISTRY AUTHORITIES CLAIM THEY DO NOT HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE STEVEDORE UNION AND THE LOCAL SHIPPING COMPANIES, IT IS WIDELY CONCEDED THAT THE MINISTRY IS THE INVISIBLE PARTNER IN THE DISCUSSIONS, PERHAPS MORE SO TODAY THAN AT ANY TIME IN THE PAST.

D) SHOULD THE DOCKERS UNION AND TERMINAL OPERATORS BE ALLOWED TO GO AHEAD WITH THEIR ALLEGED PREVIOUS PLANS TO END ALL LATE NIGHT WORK IN JAPAN' S PORTS DESPITE THE ANGRY PROTESTS OF THE FOREIGN FLAG LINES, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR THE FMC CHAIRMAN NOT TO FEEL SHE HAD BEEN PURPOSEFULLY LED ASTRAY WHILE IN JAPAN LAST WEEK. PORTER

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